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Lecture Recital: The Girl Gershwin: Music of Dana Suesse, Hannah Martin, vocals

Hannah Martin

Laura Amoriello

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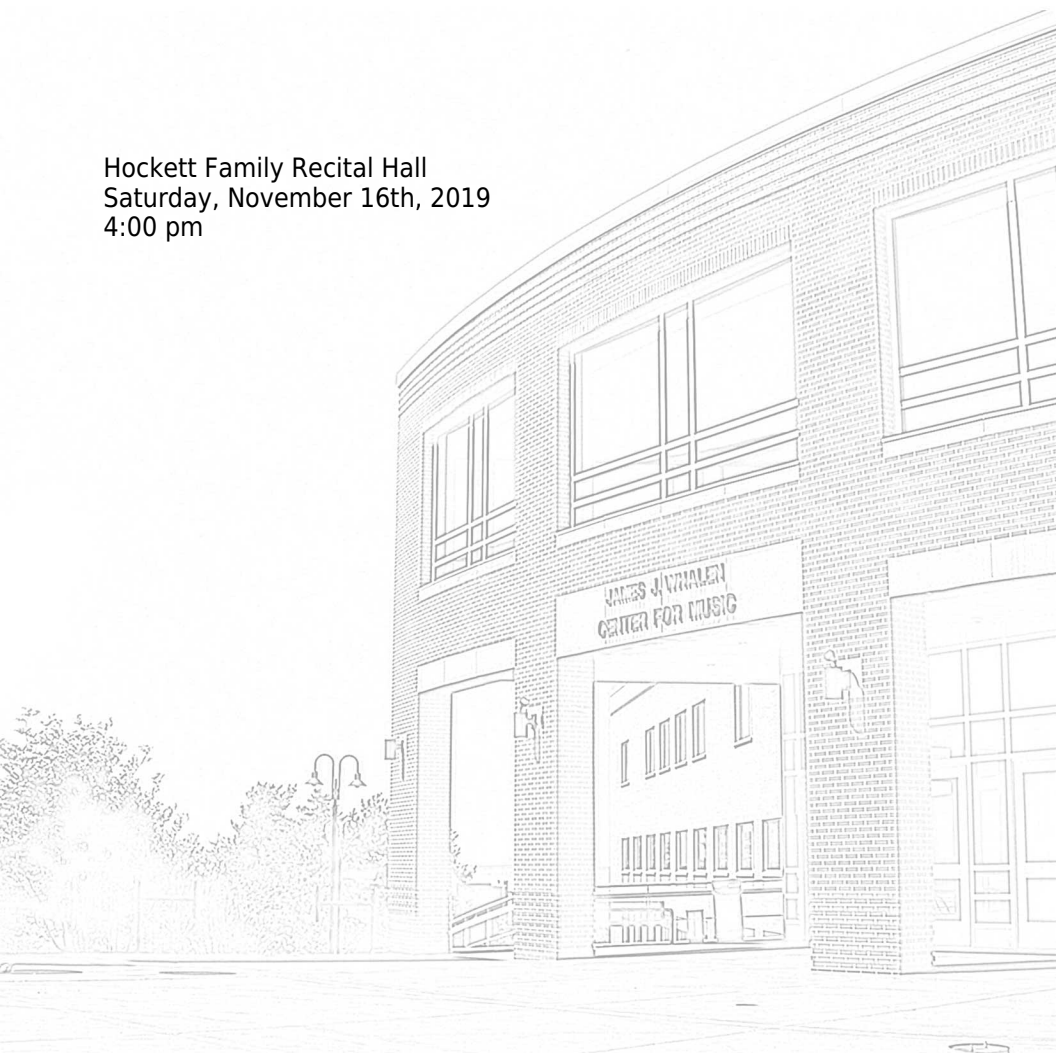
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The Girl Gershwin: Music of Dana Suesse

A Lecture Recital

Laura Amoriello, piano
Hannah Martin, vocals

Hockett Family Recital Hall
Saturday, November 16th, 2019
4:00 pm



ITHACA COLLEGE

School of Music

Program

Jazz Nocturne 1932

"My Silent Love" 1932

"Ho Hum!" 1931

"The Night Is Young and You're So Beautiful" 1936

The Cocktail Suite 1941

I. Old-Fashioned

II. Champagne

III. Bacardi

IV. Manhattan

Dana Suesse (1909-1987) was an American songwriter and composer of both popular and classical music. She was a well-known personality in the New York City music scene of the 1930s and 1940s with a gift for writing a hit tune. Her songs, such as "You Oughta Be in Pictures" as well as those on this program, are still heard in movies and TV today, and her delightful piano solos are steadily gaining popularity.

Dana was born December 3, 1909 in Kansas City, Missouri. A child prodigy, she made her concert debut at age ten. After high school, Dana and her mother Nina, a steadfast supporter of her daughter's career, moved to New York City, where Dana began studying piano with Alexander Siloti, the last surviving pupil of Franz Liszt, and composition with Rubin Goldmark, whose most famous students included Aaron Copland and George Gershwin. It wasn't long before Dana achieved success; when Bing Crosby recorded "Ho Hum" in 1931, it was an instant hit.

A prolific songwriter and gifted performer and improviser, Dana enjoyed a thriving career. In 1947, she moved to Paris to study composition with Nadia Boulanger. The return to her classical roots resulted in three concerti premiering in New York City in the 1950s: *Concerto Romantico*, *Concerto in Rhythm*, and *Jazz Concerto in D Major for Combo and Orchestra*. Yet as rock and roll reigned in the 1960s, Dana felt her popular music could no longer compete. She moved to Connecticut in 1970, where she married and lived comfortably until her death in 1987.

Thanks to the efforts of Peter Mintun, literary executor of Dana's estate, her music is available in the collection *Jazz Nocturne*, published by Dover in 2013 and edited by Mintun. Mintun's extensive essay in this edition is the only comprehensive writing on Dana's life and music currently available. Recordings include "Dana Suesse Plays Her Piano Compositions" and "Jazz Nocturne: The Collected Piano Music of Dana Suesse" by Sara Davis Buechner. For more colorful explorations, see soundcloud.com/peter-mintun (includes interviews with Dana) and the "Dana Suesse" Facebook page, maintained by Mintun.

"When the history books are corrected, fairly soon, they may start referring to George [Gershwin] as the 'Boy Suesse.' In my own estimation, these two geniuses occupy the same rung of a very precious ladder, the top rung of American masters whose natural musicianship transcended all traditional labels and classification."
-Sara Davis Buechner